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**10,000 in D.C. Hit Racist  
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# CHALLENGE



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## **'Shock and Awe' Atrocities Isolate U.S. Rulers As Millions Protest Imperialist War,**

*Page 2*

## **British Soldiers Refuse to Fight**

Two British soldiers in Iraq were ordered home after protesting that the war is killing innocent civilians. They're from the 16th Air Assault Brigade, which has been involved in heavy fighting in southern Iraq, "protecting" oilfields. A third soldier in the reserves refused orders to travel to the Middle East. The soldiers face a court martial and up to two years in jail. A military affairs lawyer said one of the soldiers "told his superiors that he wasn't prepared to enter into a conflict that involved the killing of innocent civilians." (Sunday London Times, 3/30) The two soldiers were sent back to the Brigade's barracks in Colchester, Essex.

British troops have been plagued with boots that melt in the desert sun, assault rifles that jam when sand gets into them, and whole units without enough ammo, food, toilet paper and showers. Recently a soldier discovered that two plates were missing from her body armor and she had to buy them out of her own pocket. All this, together with massive opposition to the war and increasing difficulties in the military campaign, is affecting soldiers' morale.

On top of this, British soldiers have been the targets of "friendly fire" from the U.S. blitzkrieg. One British soldier was killed and three were wounded 35 miles north of Basra when U.S. anti-tank aircraft destroyed two British armored vehicles. One survivor criticized the American pilot for shooting when there were civilians so close to the tanks. He said, "There was a boy of about 12 years old. He was no more than 20 meters away....There were all these civilians around. He had absolutely no regard for human life." If the war goes on and the number of dead and wounded in the imperialist armies increases, we could see mass opposition among soldiers. A key factor in the defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam was the refusal of U.S. soldiers to continue fighting, and openly rebelling against their officers. ☸

**GI's, National Guards Won't  
Be Hit Men For Bush,  
Page 5**

**New York City Streets:**

**250,000 Anti-War,  
600 Pro-War**



NEW YORK CITY, March 22— Over two hundred fifty thousand demonstrators decried the war in Iraq. Here, a contingent of Jews Against the Occupation marches side by side with an Arab group against discrimination.

NEW YORK CITY, March 31 — The Bush/Rumsfeld/Gen. Tommy Franks' "shock and awe" blitzkrieg attack against Iraq not only failed to win a quick victory, as they expected, but also failed to deter the anger of the growing anti-war movement. Millions have demonstrated worldwide against this war.

One of the biggest protests occurred here on March 22. A quarter of a million people marched for hours over a two-mile route from Times Square to Washington Square. They included young and old, from veterans of many previous anti-war movements to youth in their first activity against an invasion created by a system based on endless imperialist wars.

PLP members and friends participated in many ways, marching with various mass organizations we work with and distributing thousands of special CHALLENGE supplements as well as CHALLENGE itself. A group of PLP'ers rallied at one corner of 37th St. and Broadway where our chants of "Muslims, Jews, Black and White, Same Enemy Same Fight, Workers of the World. Unite!" were well received by the marchers.

Tens of thousands heard our attack both on the Bushites for launching the war, and on the Democratic Party politicians (NY Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer) for supporting it. Pointing out that many have been marching since the '60s during the Vietnam war made it clear that capitalism and imperialism make war for profits inevitable. Capitalism and peace don't mix. The only way out of this living hell is to organize a mass communist movement of workers, students and soldiers worldwide to fight for a society without any bosses — communism.

As the crowd reached Washington Square Park, after hours of marching, the cops yelled that the march was over and ordered people to disperse. Thousands refused. Several dozens youth who left the park to march in the street were beaten by the cops. Then over 1,000 marched through the neighborhood confronting riot cops, police vans and cops on horses. More cops arrived but despite their violence many remained chanting, "Shut down the war, open up the streets!"

The next day a "pro-war" rally in Times Square organized by right-wing groups only drew 600 people. Even though polls say a majority support Bush and the war, the streets definitely belong to the anti-war forces. ☸

EDITORIAL |

Millions Opposed to Iraq War Open To  
Revolutionary Politics

*"I honestly don't think the Iraqi people want us here...these people are not going to give up as easily as everyone expects. They're going to fight." (Chief Warrant Officer Sean McNeal, as his Apache helicopter was nearly hit by rifle fire)*  
*"We are invading their country. I'd be on my window with a shotgun too." (Chief Warrant Officer, Glen Woodard)*  
—From *Newsday*, March 29

Bush's war of terror against Iraqi workers is turning into a serious political defeat for the U.S. ruling class. "Shock and Awe" has boomeranged to become a catalyst for mobilizing millions around the world into a movement against U.S. imperialism. The mass base of this movement is militant, angry and thirsty for an alternative to bosses' oil wars. Only the revolutionary communist politics of the Progressive Labor Party can meet this need.

We've entered a new period of danger and opportunity. The danger stems from U.S. rulers' united determination to invade and occupy Persian Gulf oil-producing nations, despite their internal differences over tactics. Control of cheap oil remains crucial to Washington's plan for world domination far into the future. Bush's brutality in Iraq is just a first step. Once the bosses secure Iraq's oil fields, as they probably will, they are likely to target Iran next. After Iran, they may have to occupy Saudi Arabia. Widening imperialist war is the main international aspect of this new period.

But this danger also brings the richest opportunity for revolutionary growth since the Vietnam years, an aspect to be grasped and acted upon. The world-wide anti-war demonstrations on February 15 caught the

rulers napping and have shown no signs of slowing down since Bush invaded Iraq. On March 22, several hundred thousand people marched in New York City, against only 600 who came out to support the war on the following day. In London on the 22nd, perhaps "as many as 700,000" protested the Bush-Blair atrocities in Iraq, and, according to *The Observer* (3/23), "Britain's biggest wartime demonstration was a more dour, determined, and altogether angrier affair." Similar demonstrations continue throughout Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

U.S. imperialism is conducting this war in a state of increasing isolation from both the world's working class and the overwhelming majority of its own rivals. The Rumsfeld-Wolfowitz hawks around Bush thought the war would be a cakewalk. They made boasts that have all proved futile. The Saddam Hussein regime is far from crippled. The vaunted anti-Saddam rebellions by Shi'ite Muslims in southern Iraq haven't materialized. And, most importantly, the Iraqi population seems to be greeting its U.S. "liberators" with bullets and car bombs rather than the flowers Rumsfeld had promised.

The Iraqi military and some of the population are fighting back and sucking the U.S. into the guerrilla war it wasn't prepared for. However, the U.S. is still likely to win an eventual victory and occupy much of the country. But this occupation may cost far more in money and lives than Bush & Co. had predicted. Controlling Iraq after the war will be no picnic. Although French, Russian and Chinese bosses won't have sufficient strength to confront U.S. rulers head-on soon, the process of the U.S.'s political isolation will continue to acceler-

ate. This development will proceed amid growing militancy against U.S. imperialism throughout the Arab-Muslim world, particularly Iran and Saudi Arabia.

This contradiction provides fertile ground for growth of a communist movement! The anti-war movement has just begun. It has the potential to continue growing in size and militancy. Despite the lies in the rulers' media about overwhelming support for the war, key sections of the U.S. population already oppose it. The numbers in the streets don't lie, and the marchers reflect millions more at home who aren't yet ready to march. The highest rate of opposition to this war comes from black workers.

As the quotations above show, even "lifers" in the U.S. military are at the very least skeptical about the true nature of their mission in Iraq. Rank-and-file soldiers, who make up the bulk of U.S. casualties, will die in greater numbers as the fighting worsens. They are likely to begin asking hard questions about this war. The "Vietnam Syndrome" is far from dead. This skepticism can eventually turn into rebelliousness. The so-called "all-volunteer" military is in reality an economic draft. Most of the young workers in it



signed up to get job skills, not to pitch and catch bullets in the desert for the greater glory of Exxon Mobil. U.S. imperialism is politically isolated from many of its own soldiers.

Liberals and other fakers within the growing anti-imperialist movement will continue to try duping it into a pro-imperialist trap. We must expose and oppose them, and organize activity around revolutionary communist politics. It may be a long time before PLP has enough political and numerical strength to alter the fundamental relationship of forces in the class struggle, but the current opportunity is the best in many years. We can and must seize it.✪

## Liberal Hypocrisy about "Unfairness" in U.S. Military Covers Plan to Restore Draft, Widen Imperialist Wars

The liberal media, along with their rented retired generals, are blasting the Bush-Rumsfeld White House for invading Iraq without enough ground troops. The liberals have claimed for months that hundreds of thousands of troops were needed to cover supply lines and provide reinforcements for casualties or forces tied up in battles against an Iraqi military underestimated by Bush & Co.

This tactical spat among the bosses reveals a need they have long feared to discuss in public. Iraq is just the first step of their grand plan to occupy Middle Eastern oil fields and to suppress "terrorists" (i.e., anti-U.S. nationalists) around the world. If, as the liberals assert, Iraq alone requires a minimum of 300,000 ground troops (with an

additional 200,000 at sea and in the air), then comparable actions in Iran and Saudi Arabia, will call for multiples of that figure.

The dirty little secret the liberals are now letting out of the bag is that the "all-volunteer" military has reached its limits. Bush's patriotic flag-waving after 9/11 didn't exactly produce a stampede to military recruiting offices. As the main Establishment media are now beginning to suggest, the return of the draft is just a matter of time. The liberals' Big Lie here, first uttered by Harlem Congressman Rangel, is the pretense that a draft would make military service more "democratic" than the present system. "It's just not fair," opines the Congressman, "that the people that we ask to fight our wars are people who join the military because of economic conditions, because they have fewer options." Rangel makes this statement in a long New York Times article (3/30) that laments the relative absence of the middle class in today's U.S. military.

Behind this façade of equity, the liberals' real goal is to increase the deadly fighting strength of the U.S. war

machine. There's a precedent for this maneuver. At the end of World War II, when U.S. imperialism had to gear up for the Cold War against the old international communist movement, the Pentagon under the liberal Democrat Truman integrated the U.S. armed forces and expanded military opportunities for women. The lesson is that when the bosses begin mouthing off about "social justice" and "sharing burdens," their real goal is to sucker millions of workers, students and others into fighting and dying for their rotten system.

Watch for the Democrats and Rockefeller Republicans to begin hopping on the Rangel draft bandwagon, perhaps as soon as the 2004 presidential election. They'll probably paste a fig-leaf name like "national service" on it. We can't prevent the rulers from restoring the draft. But we may have a lot to say about the conflict between workers and bosses that will surely sharpen once the draft and its cost, both economic and human, becomes apparent.

## WHAT WE FIGHT FOR:

✪PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of capitalism, like wages and divisions of labor.

✪Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

✪Communism means working collectively to build a society based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money

and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

✪Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

✪Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

✪Communism means abolishing nations which leads to nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✪Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers, eventually everyone must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!



**CHALLENGE  
PERIODICALS**  
**PO Box 808**  
**BROOKLYN, NY 11202**  
**www.plp.org**  
**email:**  
**cd188@juno.com**  
**718 630 9440**

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# Bosses Hand Machinists Layoffs, CEO Gets Millions

"But what about the CEO?" complained a union machinist at a recent crew meeting. "He just got a million-dollar bonus, but you tell us the company can't afford to keep our jobs." The big boss had just finished describing management's plan to surplus a bunch of our machines and offload our jobs.

"The CEO's bonus is not something you can affect," the boss answered. "You can't control the economic environment. You can't control the [Iraq] war. The only thing you can control is the job you do, so do the best job you can. That's what we have to focus on now."

## If We Produce All Value, How Come the Bosses Make All the Important Decisions?

It's not every day a boss states capitalism's failures so clearly. Our labor produces every penny of capital the company has to invest. Yet the bosses decide what to do with that capital. In essence, the surplus of capital produced by our labor — the value above and beyond raw materials, machines and the cost of labor, etc. — is stolen from us.

The bosses flood the market with goods, while cutting workers' wages. Inevitably, this leads to a "crisis of overproduction." More goods are produced than can be sold at a profit. Since capitalists produce only for profit — not for workers' needs — they cut back production. Millions are laid off.

Many of us are Vietnam veterans. Millions of our class brothers and sisters, both U.S. and Vietnamese, died on the altar of U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia. Now it's our children's turn to fight and die for the bosses' empire. U.S. imperialism plans to control the world by controlling the flow of oil. The bosses' foreign policy think tanks have been planning to invade Iraq for at least the last four years.

We spend a lifetime making the bosses rich, and powerful. Capitalism and its governmental forms are designed that way. There's no way to restrict the bosses' power under capitalism. Elections are bought; the so-called "free press" is "free" only to the corporate world that controls every significant media outlet. Unions that defend the capitalist system end up supporting one boss or another.

## Workers' Power Is The Answer

If we workers want the power to decide where the value we produce goes, if we want to eliminate these endless crises of overproduction, if we want to end imperialist wars that claim the lives of so many, we must think outside the limits of capitalism. We must do a lot more than a "good job." We must build for communist revolution!

Communist production is for need, not profit. This allows us to organize a rational system based on the needs of the working class. "Crises of overproduction" will disappear.

Only communism can end imperialist wars. Communism relies on the might of the international working class to



defeat ALL bosses. Communist internationalism stands in sharp contrast to the nationalism of the IAM, which chose "American Might" as the theme of next year's calendar. Such nationalist messages pave the way for endless imperialist wars.

Certainly we can do a lot about the economic environment and about the bosses' wars. We can reclaim the power that is ours by right. Although long and difficult, the path to communist revolution is the answer. In times like these, capitalism's failures become clear for all to see, providing opportunities for revolutionary growth. Join the PLP! Fight for Communism!✪

## Chicago State Students' Walkout Opposes Invasion of Iraq

**CHICAGO, March 21** — Fifty mostly black, working-class students from three classes walked out at Chicago State University today to protest the U.S. invasion of Iraq. They marched across campus and boldly entered the Student Union and Administration Buildings with signs, chanting and bullhorn blaring. Class-change rallies on a path between buildings involved even more students on a picket line. One group of students demonstrated for two-and-a-half hours and then returned later to urge another class to walk out.

The students gave the leadership to these actions, which were initiated by two PLP professors who refused to maintain "business as usual" in class. They made signs and initiated chants, "No war, more peace, stop fighting in the East," "No Blood for Oil" and "Books not Bombs." Tonight six CSU students and friends came to a city-wide meeting, blasting capitalism, racism and imperialist war, providing an inspiration to all present. These events were preceded by a March 5 student speak-out against the war. Here too, the PLP students took leadership.

Twelve years ago the PL professors protested Desert Storm by giving the speeches themselves. We have learned to rely on the students. They came through for the working class.✪

## Parent-Teacher Allegiance Is Pledge to Oppose War

**BRONX, NY, March 31** — A fight against an elementary school principal's demand that young children be forced to stand and acknowledge the pledge allegiance to the bosses' flag has mushroomed into a parents' rebellion and about 35 staff members wearing pledges against the war in Iraq. This offensive by parents and teachers has put the school administration on the defensive in their attempt to carry out the ruling class's aim of indoctrinating young schoolchildren with nationalism and patriotism.

As reported in the March 19 CHALLENGE, the administration's fascist tactic of forcing a PL teacher and his pre-Kindergarten students to stand for the pledge of allegiance backfired when the teacher fought back, exposing the principal's breaking of their own rules and foiling his attempt to escort the 4-year-olds to the classroom next door.

Parents, one who was a PL member, boldly demanded, via a petition, to have their children returned to their classroom and be allowed to sit during the pledge. Many involved in this fight are CHALLENGE readers.

Three days after the principal backed down, anti-war staff members distributed 50 stickers with a different allegiance: "I PLEDGE TO STOP THE WAR IN IRAQ!" Twenty-five wore them. One, with a 19-year-old son in the war, took a sticker and, although she felt conflicted, said, "Look I want to support the troops but I'm against this oil war!" The administration told them to "keep their political views at home," but many kept wearing their stickers. One teacher said, "If people can wear American flags then I can wear my sticker!"

The next day, six parents in our classroom — all wearing the sticker — led a sit-in against the pledge of allegiance. The administration tried to bar the parents from the room. The PL parent shot back, "We're telling you we're going to sit with our children during the pledge." The principal then said the children needed a parental note with permission to sit. The parents wrote

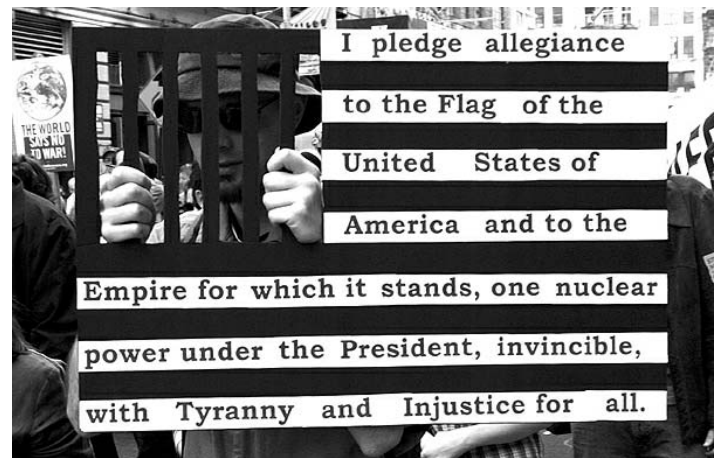
notes right there in the classroom. The Pledge came over the loudspeaker and the teacher from next door entered to lead the class. Not one parent or student stood nor recited the bosses' pledge nor sang the "Star Spangled Banner." This teacher vowed to never return again.

Then, after the parents left, the teachers union rep entered the classroom — on the principal's side! Instead of supporting the teacher, the rep shot questions at him, about the anti-war sticker he was wearing and about the parents who had just left. Then ten more teachers wore stickers that day.

The next week, the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) entered the case. The NYCLU lawyer said harassment of those refusing to participate in the pledge is widespread. She said recently an immigrant student sat during the pledge and the racist principal ordered him to stand or "get out of the country"! The lawyers at both agencies applauded the courage of the fighting parents and teachers. The CCR director sent a letter to the principal demanding she stop sending someone into the classroom to recite the pledge and cease harassing and/or ostracizing the PL teacher. It emphasizes that the pledge is voluntary (2nd Court of Appeals, Goetz vs. Ansell).

The 35 staffers wearing anti-war stickers, the parent "sit-in" against the pledge and NYCLU/CCR involvement put the administration on the defensive.

Although we've won some ground, the battle is far from over. The principal still recites the pledge with the PL teacher's students "if they choose"; parents have not been notified of their rights; and a student



note is still informally required to abstain from the pledge. Of course, most Pre-K through second-grade students are too young to understand the words to be able to "choose."

The administration wants all the students to stand and salute the bosses' imperialist flag, under threat of intimidation and ostracism. This is how fascism works. Walk to the beat of the bosses drum' or you'll be made an example of. But the working class is too smart for this!

Many parents and teachers see that "liberty and justice for all" directly contradicts their material existence. While they understand the pledge is hypocritical, they think maybe they should stand out of respect for others who do participate. But we should have no respect for this cruel, unjust and murderous system which offers nothing to the working class. They slaughter thousands in Iraq to secure the bosses' oil while simultaneously putting all Pre-Kindergarten programs on the chopping block.

As capitalism's anti-worker attacks intensify, workers and students will not only "sit-in" against this hypocritical pledge, but will help build a movement to eliminate this fascist system.✪



# Tens of Thousands in LA March, Walk Out vs. Iraq War



**LOS ANGELES, CA** — In the last two weeks, things have changed very fast! On March 22 there was a march of over 10,000 people in Hollywood. The previous Saturday, over 20,000 marched in downtown LA. At the Hollywood march, PL'ers arrived early to sell CHALLENGE and invite the demonstrators to march on May Day in solidarity with workers of the world, and to destroy racism and imperialist war with communist revolution.

The marchers' mood was changing from

pacifism to anger. There were more black and Latin marchers and more workers. A PLP member declared the workers of the world will unite against the bosses and their system of imperialist slaughter if given the alternative of revolution for workers' power. She asked people to buy CHALLENGE and many gladly took out \$1 and \$5 bills. One said, "I knew PLP 37 years ago! It's great to see you!" Some gave their names to find out more about May Day and PLP.

Although they had no permit, marchers took over the street and marched to CNN headquarters to denounce their war coverage. As we marched, three young black and Latin women led hundreds of marchers in chanting, "1-2-3-4, We won't fight your racist oil war! 5-6-7-8, We don't want your police state"; "ExxonMobil, You can't hide, We charge you with genocide,"; "No sangre obrera por ganancias petroleras,"; "Same Enemy, Same Fight,

Workers of the World Unite," and many others. Other marchers used the bullhorn and we chanted with them. A black woman denounced Bush, Cheney, Rice, Powell, Lieberman and Pelosi for being racist warmongers. "Fight the power!" she chanted. As we approached the CNN building people yelled, "No Blood for ratings," and "Exxon, Mobil, Chevron, Shell; Take your war and go to hell!" After a while, the police started moving demonstrators out of the area.

The LAPD reported that over a one-week period, there were 22 demonstrations in LA involving tens of thousands of people. Their excuse for beating demonstrators who sat down at the Federal Building? They were overworked! Black, Latin and white high school students had walkouts and marches, facing threats from administrators and police attacks. Cops came in swinging and attacked students at one high school after a small fight between students. The night the bombing started, CHALLENGE was grabbed at demonstrations as people looked for answers to how

the bosses could carry out this carnage knowing there is worldwide opposition.

At a nearby college, local and campus cops beat up and arrested three Latin students as they and many others were preparing to walk out after the bombing started. This only made students angrier, leading to more protests.

The fight for May Day is part of the long-term fight to give these angry demonstrators a solution to the bosses' crises and murderous wars. The Party is growing modestly. If we seize this new period, lead with CHALLENGE and build strong ties with angry workers and students, this modest growth can accelerate. We should not underestimate the importance of mass CHALLENGE sales. As Marx said, when ideas are seized by the masses, they become a material force. We are being tested, and plan to pass the test. ☸

## NJ Schools Forum Hears Attack On Iraq War, Fascist Laws

One hundred parents, teachers, and students attended a forum at a New Jersey high school on the war in Iraq, fascist laws and racist attacks on immigrants. PLP's communist ideas were enthusiastically received by many. We defeated the principal's anti-communist attack, won new respect for our ideas and helped spark a campaign against military recruiters in the school.

Several comrades, both parents and students, have been active in this working-class school's PTA for several years. We have tried to bring a communist analysis to the issues facing our school: overcrowded classrooms, inadequate physical facilities and supplies, and metal detectors and surveillance cameras inside the school. We've led several student actions against these conditions. When we've explained how capitalism is the root cause of these conditions, the administration and/or its supporters have said "politics does not belong in the PTA." But as reality becomes clearer, our friends in the PTA are increasingly recognizing the truth of our analysis.

Last fall, our current school principal told the teachers he had been sent here to "get (the) parents under control." Before the forum, he told one Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) member that he would call the police, if necessary, to keep communists out of the forum. However, the discussion turned things around.

Several speakers reviewed the history of the Middle East and the imperialist role of the U.S. One speaker linked the war for control of oil in Iraq to the "No Child Will Be Left Behind" law. This law forces schools to give students' names to military recruiters.

Many students engaged in enthusiastic and intelligent questioning of, and discussion with, the speakers. One student called for a walkout when the bombing started. Other audience members advocated internationalism and described the phoniness of the bosses' "democracy" and the need to attack the whole capitalist system.

As a result, the principal stood up and said HE would lead the student march to join the local demonstration planned the day after the bombing! That didn't happen, but the following week at a PTA committee meeting parents expressed outrage over an Army recruiter being stationed at our school. They decided to launch a petition campaign against the recruiter. We will try to make this a city-wide drive, to force the Board of Education to stop assisting the ruling class in turning our children into cannon fodder.

Two of our Party's strengths — communist collectivity and persistent activity in mass organizations — have helped move people into action against the class enemy. Over time, some will seriously consider joining PLP. It's clear we have a long way to go before seeing the full fruits of our labor, a communist revolution. It is equally clear, however, that the inevitability of economic crisis, wars and growing fascism under capitalism will continue to spur workers to consider a communist alternative. ☸

## Both Parties Condemn Detroit's Children To Lead Poisoning

**DETROIT, March 25** — While the City Council here passed a useless resolution against Bush's oil war, tens of thousands of children are suffering from lead poisoning due to industrial pollution and old and dilapidated housing. In 2001 nearly 17,000 young children had elevated levels of lead in their blood, according to the Detroit Free Press. The actual number is much higher, as only a fraction of Detroit's children are ever tested.

Lead enters the bloodstream from paint chips, lead in the soil or lead dust from disintegrating paint. It travels to the brain, soft tissue and bones. Children whose diets lack sufficient calcium and iron are hurt the most. The poisoning can begin even before birth.

Lead was removed from paint in the U.S. in 1978 and banned from gasoline in 1986, producing a considerable drop in lead poisoning in children.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) says, "[Lead] can reduce IQ, cause learning disabilities and impair hearing. Children who have elevated blood lead levels often experience reduced attention spans, hyperactivity and can exhibit behavior problems. At higher exposures, lead can damage a child's kidneys and central nervous system and cause anemia, coma, convulsions and even death."

Racist Bush is stacking a U.S. Centers for Disease

Control (CDC) advisory committee to make it even more sympathetic to the lead industry and set a higher acceptable blood-lead level than the current official limit. Last year, he tried to exclude required testing from federal Medicaid regulations. At least 10% of Detroit's children have lead levels high enough to cause irreparable health problems.

But poor families are often condemned to live in crumbling housing in polluted neighborhoods. The executive director of the Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning estimates it would take \$50 billion to \$100 billion to clean up the worst lead poisoning in 25 million U.S. houses or apartments, but the federal government targets only about \$150 million a year for lead abatement. At that rate, he said, "That's a 1,000-year program ..." (Detroit Free Press) A total of 1.1 million Michigan homes need to be cleaned up. But since 1994, federal, state, and city efforts have abated only 1,500 homes in the state. Meanwhile, the bosses have built new baseball and football stadiums and several gambling casinos.

To these rulers our lives are cheap. Communist revolution is the only way to bury the system that murders millions of children, from Baghdad to Detroit. ☸

## Brazil: Auto, Steel Workers Launch Mass Strike vs. Lula's Attacks

**SAO PAULO, BRAZIL, March 27** — Some 23,000 auto and steel workers walked out in the industrial belt here in the first major strike since President Lula took power in January. Lula, former auto/steel union head, was elected posing as the candidate of the working class and the poor. The strike was called by Forza Sindical, the second largest auto and steel workers union, which supported Lula's candidacy.

Forty plants were shut on the strike's first day. It could escalate to eventually affect 1,500 plants and shops. The workers are demanding a 10% wage hike. The C.U.T. labor federation (backed by Lula's Workers' Party) tried to block the strike, saying on the day the strike began that it had asked for a 10% wage increase without strike action. A 10.26% pay raise last November has been eaten

away by inflation.

In addition, 800,000 federal workers are threatening to strike against the Lula administration's plan to "reform" social security and privatize their pension plan. In this era of international capitalist crisis, the billions in pension funds will be open to speculators. The federal workers' union also supported Lula's election.

Workers cannot rely on politicians to represent their interests, even one like Lula, who started as a rank-and-file union leader before running for office. The rules of the capitalist electoral game are stacked against workers. Whoever becomes president must serve the class interests of corporations and bosses. ☸

# NATIONAL GUARDS: WORLD VIEWS BUSH KLAN AS NEW NAZIS

(The following are some of the ideas discussed at a National Guard weekend drill.)

Somebody forgot to tell Iraq they were supposed to surrender. Instead of being a video game, where "only" nameless Iraqis die, the war is now being fought in the mud and the sand. And it looks like it could get worse. Many more young men and women will be killed before it's over.

But this is just the beginning. While the bodies of Iraqi children are still being carried out of the rubble in Baghdad, the

fearless leaders of the U.S. are already planning the next blood-letting, and the one after that as well.

This is no war of liberation. It's an imperialist war. For all the U.S. rulers' attempts to equate Hussein with Hitler, most of the world views the U.S. as the new Nazis. The invasion of Iraq resembles Hitler marching into Czechoslovakia.

U.S. soldiers have been thrown into a meat grinder to kill and be killed in order to continue a 30 year strategy of the U.S. to dominate the Middle East and control of the oil flow to Europe and



Asia.

In every imperialist war soldiers from all sides are victimized. They have been killed and wounded and have become killers themselves. But on many occasions they have also taken matters into their own hands. In World War I, German and Russian soldiers fraternized on the front lines, even playing soccer together rather than fight. U.S. soldiers in Vietnam developed the strategy of "search and evade" missions to avoid orders to kill Vietnamese peasants.

In this war we're already seeing dissent and uneasiness within the U.S. military.

Many soldiers feel mis-led by their leadership and by the U.S. ruling class.

But soldiers must realize they have a responsibility for what is happening. No order from the chain of command takes away a soldier's ability to think. No contract absolves a person from a moral responsibility to decide right from wrong.

In the past soldiers have done great things to unite with workers from "enemy" countries and fight for a better world. In this war soldiers can once again play such an historic role. ☸

## Anti-racist GIs: 'Won't Kill Iraqis'

A friend related a conversation she overheard at her health clinic job. A worker was telling her friend that her nephew, a 19-year-old black youth, is in the Army in the Persian Gulf. He called to tell her he was all right. He said, "Auntie, don't tell Mom, but my friends and I are working as a group. We're doing what we need to do to protect each other, but we see that these Iraqis are brown-skinned like us and even though the brass want us to kill them, we're not doing it and we're not going to do it. So don't worry Auntie."

My friend's reaction was, "Racism is the weak point of this system!"

*A Comrade*

## 10,000 in D.C. Hit Racist Anti-Affirmative Action Suit

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 1 — Last night over 2,500 students from Howard University and a dozen other HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) converged for a teach-in on affirmative action, followed by a night time march to the Supreme Court. Students stayed out all night at the rally and to wait in line to attend the arguments in the affirmative action case of the University of Michigan (UM). They joined a rally of 10,000 today. The protest was aimed at fighting racism.

Racists are claiming in their lawsuit that the UM is violating their civil rights by admitting black students who, they claim, are not as qualified as they are. So far the courts have supported these racists. The Supreme Court probably will as well. While the attack on affirmative action is racist, affirmative action itself has done very little for working-class African Americans. Its main beneficiaries have been white women and middle-class black students. The ruling class has used it as a tool to whip up racist sentiment nationwide.

The march itself was an inspiration, as students applauded those who



linked the fight against racism to the worldwide struggle against the U.S. war in Iraq. Signs said, "Our war is not with Iraq." Chants opposed the war as well as affirmative action. Many students correctly understand that there is a racist war abroad and a racist war at home, and that the perpetrator of both is the U.S. ruling class.

At the rally the Amnesty International (AI) chapter announced a teach-in against the war. Some AI members won the crowd to move in a more leftward, anti-war, anti-racist direction. PLP members participating in this action explicitly called for violent revolution against the racist, capitalist system. ☸

## TALK ABOUT 'HARM'S WAY'....

With all the Bush administration blather about "supporting our troops in harm's way in Iraq — where the rulers ordered them — they don't seem too concerned about the condition of veterans disabled from previous wars, not to mention the current war of aggression in Iraq. "Cutting already under-funded veterans' programs to offset the costs of tax cuts is indefensible and callous," declared the commander of the Disabled American Veterans. He was alluding to the Bush plan to slash \$470 billion from domestic spending, including health care for sick and disabled vets. "You are asking veterans to swallow a bitter pill to remedy an illness of your own making," he said.

The White House is so "concerned" about U.S. troops that it's cutting millions from their health benefits — scaling the heights of hypocrisy. ☸

## Imperialists' Bombs Make Big Bucks for U.S. Profiteers

U.S. imperialism is built on death, destruction and the dollar. Former Marine General Smedley Butler once testified in the 1930s that he and his Marines were "racketeers for capitalism" who were used to make country after country "safe" for the Wall Street bankers and giant corporations. Never was this more true than for the Bush administration's plan for Iraq.

First, workers in the U.S. and worldwide are being forced to pay for the weapons and troops to destroy Iraq, with Bush asking for an initial \$74 billion down payment "for the first six months." But, in February, even before they started raining bombs on Baghdad, U.S. corporations were being asked to bid on the contracts to rebuild what the Pentagon is now destroying, which, according to an investigative report in The New York Times (3/23) could cost at least another \$100 billion, also financed by U.S. taxpayers. And the "free market" rules GUARANTEE these billionaires at least a 10% profit over and above whatever they say it will cost.

Contracts are restricted to U.S. corporations, which, says the Times, "has added to the profound international divisions that already surround the war." Not only that, but Secy. of State Powell says, "We're going to use the assets of the people of Iraq, especially their oil assets..."

Of course, it's the oil giants like Exxon Mobil and Chevron Texaco that will be profiting from these Iraqi assets, not the people. When has capitalism ever allowed "the people" to reap the fruits of their labor?

U.S. rulers intend to control the occupation and reconstruction of Iraq (assuming, of course, they're successful in occupying it). But the main reason for this reconstruction is the fact that Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the world, and the cheapest to get out of the ground, which has U.S. oil moguls licking their



chops. If not for the oil, the key to U.S. imperialist world domination, there probably would have been no invasion in the first place.

### RECONSTRUCTION PLAN EXPOSES MASS MURDER

Interestingly, contracts are being let not only for the oil fields and seaports, but also for the infrastructure whose destruction is killing the Iraqi people — electric power plants, roads, airports, railroads, irrigations systems, potable water — AND for schools and hospitals! It seems those "smart" bombs know exactly what to destroy.

### MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX RIDING HIGH

The corporations bidding for these "fruits" of capitalist war are among the largest in the U.S. — Haliburton (from which its former CEO, Dick Cheney, moved to become Vice-President), Bechtel (on whose board sits Reagan's former Secy. of State George Schultz, Fluor (who hired Kenneth Oscar, former acting assistant secretary of the Army overseeing Pentagon purchases, and Bobby Inman, former admiral and deputy head of the CIA). How's that for a military-industrial complex?

Pay, bomb, kill, destroy. Then pay, rebuild, still more profits, rule the world. The story of capitalism — until the working class writes the final chapter: communist revolution. ☸



# LETTERS

## Do the Math— It’s the Racist War For Oil

I’m a math teacher and on the day the war started I wrote four numbers on the board: \$100,000,000,000; 3000 in 48 hours; 29% compared to 12%; and 112,000,000,000 barrels.

First I asked students what they thought each number stood for. Then I gave them some math problems and we discussed the implications. The first number, of course, is the amount of money the Bush administration plans to spend on this war just for starters. We calculated how many schools could be fixed up, how many houses for the homeless could be built, how many people we could send to college, etc., with the \$100 billion.

The next number is the bombs they will drop in 48 hours, which we calculated to be about one a minute and we discussed what this would mean.

The third number compares the percentage of black youth in the army to the percentage of black people in the population. We talked about the racism in society which drives black workers and youth into the army in order to get money for college or for job training or for a job, period.

The last figure is the 112 billion barrels of oil in Iraq, which of course is what this war is really about. They can get the oil for \$1 a barrel and sell it for \$30 a barrel. This war is about profits for the oil companies. Although I am dismayed by the prospect of so many lives being destroyed to serve capitalism, I was heartened by these classroom discussions. We must plant the seeds of opposition to this system, particularly among high school students who can turn into unwilling soldiers for the U.S. bosses.

*Red Mathematician*

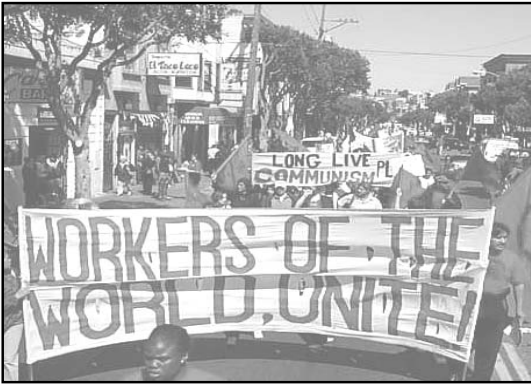
## Racist Airport Cops Attack 12-year-olds

I work at a large Mid-West airport where I witnessed a sickening racist, fascist incident. After my shift ended, I was waiting for a city bus at the airport transit center when six airport cops surrounded five young Somali working-class immigrants. They were about 12 or 13 years old. These youths had gotten off at the wrong stop, ending up at the airport instead of the Mall of America. They tried to explain themselves, but the cops wouldn't listen. One very fearful young boy kept looking down, a normal reaction coming from a fascist war-torn Somali society where any militiaman with a gun can stop you. A cop yelled, "Hey, you, look at us when we're talking to you!" The racist cops told them they had "no right" to be at the airport's public transit depot and detained them until the next bus arrived.

Aboard the bus I told these boys, "You've got to be very careful around cops; in this country they like to kill black people." (U.S.-style racism was still new to them.)

In this post-9/11 time, airport cops will harass you, especially if you're Muslim and/or immigrant. Their anti-working class and anti-immigrant racism will only get worse, given the U.S. bosses' imperialist attack on Iraqi workers.

For the past few years I've been getting CHALLENGE to my co-workers, immigrant and non-immigrant. We have many dis-



cussions about why U.S. bosses want war with Iraq. In light of this racist attack, I intend to, (1) get more CHALLENGES out, and (2) inform my co-workers about this racist incident and how it relates to the bosses' drive for fascism at home and imperialist war overseas.

The only way workers can stop fascist cops and their masters, the U.S. bosses, from oppressing us is communist revolution to destroy capitalism.

*Airport Red*

## War Turns Pledge Upside Down

On a usual day in my first class, when the Pledge of Allegiance is said over the loud-speaker, at least 30 kids stand up and pledge to the flag (out of 34; I'm one of the four who doesn't). However, this morning (the day after the war began), I was shocked to see that only eight kids stood up. I asked aloud who was for the war, and of course, it was only the people standing. And at that, not even all of the kids standing were pro-war. So how do you like that?!

Brooklyn High School Student

## Patriotism Undercuts Anti-War Fight



On March 20, at least 1,000 students and faculty here in Towson, Maryland shut down York Road and surrounding avenues in a huge protest against the Iraq war. Despite the horrendous rainy weather, 100 Towson University students and faculty, 600 from Goucher College (one-half the entire student body) and several dozen from the local high school marched from the town's main traffic circle to the Towson Armory. Many businesses stopped work as awe-struck workers looked on.

This walkout/protest was part of a nationwide call by the umbrella group ANSWER, and endorsed by our Towson University Anti-war Coalition. At Towson, it began with 100 students massing on the Beach and shaking noisemakers. A very small pro-war group holding a massive U.S. flag stood Directly across from us.

At this point, the chants from our side, modestly left-leaning with no nationalist rhetoric, suddenly turned into "USA! USA!" When I asked a member of our group why the antiwar side was using this, she said, "Well, if peace is patriotic..."

I replied hotly, "I hate patriotism!" She didn't answer. I suspect she disagreed tac-

**"I was shocked to see that only eight kids stood up. I asked aloud who was for the war, and of course, it was only the people standing. And at that, not even all of the kids standing were pro-war. So how do you like that?!"**

**Brooklyn High School Student**

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tically, not ideologically.

On the bus on the way home, black workers I talked to seemed to think it was insufficient to stop imperialist war but thought the real solution was either to stay home and "live your life as always," or to trust in Jesus, or both. The walkout appeared to upset rather than inspire them. Communist ideas need to make deeper inroads among these workers.

The "peace-because-we-want-it" and "the-people-control-the-country" platform is a dead end in and of itself. The Baltimore Sun and the Baltimore Times both interviewed me during the march. I told them that the show of support was great but insufficient. I said U. S. rulers need this war to protect their long-term investment in crude oil and to exercise direct control over the regions where it's most plentiful. I doubt either publication will print that.

A school friend I've been talking to seems receptive to our ideas even though she's still easily swayed by reformist slogans when enough people are shouting them. We really need to continue building revolutionary consciousness on our campuses and elsewhere. It's becoming clearer by the day that phony left/liberal politics are actually far more damaging than the mainstream ones coming from the U.S. government. Students, faculty and workers should all recognize the dangers and build on the opportunities.

*A Towson Comrade*

## Aim Struggle At Wall Street

In a discussion about war in Iraq among retired workers who support labor causes, one brother said, "There are no winners or losers in this war." I disagreed, saying that although the U.S. economy has been in deep recession, as soon as the bombs started falling the stock market zoomed upward. Then Bush asked Congress for \$75 billion in emergency funds to replace expensive missiles fired off in just a few days.

I said the billionaire class that profits from this war and runs the government don't panic at protests in Washington, Albany or City Hall against the war and the murderous cuts in our life support systems. They laugh all the way to the bank while the Republican and Democratic politicians blame each other for our suffering. Meanwhile they serve the military-industrial complex responsible for the war by unanimously supporting it.

But these rich bosses would be deathly afraid if workers attacked their pillars of power like Wall street, targeting our real enemies, those responsible for our misery.

I concluded that the labor movement was born in struggle against corporate

tyranny and capitalism and it needs to get back to that task if it expects to grow.

*Retired Worker*

## Rummy to Saddam: Let's Make A Deal

The April 2 issue of CHALLENGE correctly described the U.S.-Saddam Hussein connection ("CIA Trained Saddam To Be a Fascist Killer"), linking the collaboration of the CIA and other agencies as far back as the Kennedy Presidency. Adjoining the article was a picture of Donald Rumsfeld shaking Saddam's hand when Rummy was a special envoy for the Reagan Administration. A recent Village Voice article by James Ridgeway explains more details of that meeting.

As CHALLENGE pointed out, U.S. rulers supported Saddam in the 1980's during Iraq's war against Iran, which had overthrown the U.S. puppet regime of the Shah. But Rumsfeld, coached by then Secretary of State George Schultz, was negotiating a plan for Schultz's former employer the Bechtel Corporation, "a huge engineering and construction company." Documents from the Institute of Policy Studies suggest that Rumsfeld tried to broker a deal to build an oil pipeline from Iraq across Jordan to the port of Aqaba. In return, the U.S. would give special loans, military aid, and ignore Saddam's gassing of the Kurds in northern Iraq. Says the Institute, "He never raised the issue of poison gas. In fact, when the UN undertook consideration of an Iranian resolution condemning the use of gas, the U.S. worked against it." Saddam ultimately reneged on the pipeline deal, although the U.S. continued supporting him.

All this indicates once again how crucial Iraqi oil is to the region. If the U.S. captures Iraq, companies like Bechtel, who benefit from contracts to "rebuild Iraq," will profit in the tens of millions from the war. [See page 5]

*Chilltown Red*

## CHALLENGE Reader Receives Cheers

I'm a student at Cal State University. I have a steady CHALLENGE-DEASFIO readership of five, through which about 10-15 high school and university students read the paper and PLP pamphlets I copy with my own resources.

Last month we had a walkout protesting the U.S. war on Iraq. Given it is a conservative area it went well. Two CHALLENGE readers and myself organized it. About 60 walked out, including 15 professors. Amnesty International, International Answer and the Peace and Life Center spoke about peace and that kicking Bush out of office is the answer to the current situation. Some cheered. But the greatest cheer of all was for a CHALLENGE reader who explained the reasons behind war. She said replacing Bush with a Democrat or a Green was not the answer. Rather the solution lay in communist revolution. to smash the profit system that causes war. Everyone cheered. even some people walking by. The local Univision channel interviewed me about my reasons for walking out. I explained the unjustness of the war against the people of Iraq and the real reasons behind the war.

*Cal State student*

# Film Review: *In Whose Interest?*

This 30-minute documentary, produced by independent film-maker David Kaplowitz, asks the vital question, “Who benefits from U.S. foreign policy,” and vividly answers it by examining the U.S. role in Guatemala, Vietnam, East Timor, El Salvador and Palestine/Israel. Some of us teachers have been showing it in our classes, but it also should be shown and discussed in community groups, churches and union halls.

The film begins with the U.S. overthrow of the democratically-elected Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954. Arbenz had instituted a land reform program that seized some of the United Fruit Company’s unused land and given it to landless peasants. The Eisenhower administration feared that this “lack of respect” for U.S. business interests might spread so it engineered a coup, installing a military regime that slaughtered more than 200,000 peasants, mostly Mayans, over the next 36 years.

Then, in the 1960s, in order to protect its Pacific empire, the U.S. tried to crush a popular insurgency in Vietnam, replacing the defeated French. It dropped the equivalent of one Nagasaki atomic bomb per week for 7½ years. There are fascinating interviews with Vietnam veteran GI’s, who testify how soldiers were misled about the war’s real reasons, the way GI’s are being misled today about Iraq.

The next segment provides powerful footage of atrocities committed by Indonesian troops in East Timor. U.S. President Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger gave Indonesia’s military dictator Suharto,

the green light for the assault only hours before the invasion. Close ties with Indonesia were vital for U.S. corporations, especially because of its large oil deposits and other natural resources and its friendly investment climate for U.S. multi-nationals. Indonesia also sits next to the most important oil transportation sea lanes in the Pacific. So one-third of East Timor’s population was wiped out to satisfy U.S. corporations! This was a repetition of the 1965 bloodbath when Suharto, backed by the CIA, carried out a coup and slaughtered one million, many of them communists.

In El Salvador, the U.S. spent \$1 million a day to back a military regime that killed 75,000 workers and peasants.

Finally, the film reviews Palestine/Israel, where the U.S. finances Israel’s brutal occupation by giving the Israeli government over \$3 billion a year and selling it tanks, helicopters and jet fighters.

The film concludes by again asking whose interest U.S. foreign policy represents. Noam Chomsky replies that economic power is highly concentrated in a few mammoth corporations, which use their control over the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as the media, to shape foreign policy for their own benefit. One important idea absent from the film is an examination of why this concentration of economic and political power is inevitable under capitalism — a good topic for discussion with our students and co-workers after watching the film.

High School Teacher

# Destroy the World To Save It?

They say rally around the flag  
They say rally once again  
‘cause We must destroy the world to save it

While the people fight and die  
keep them going with a lie  
We must destroy the world to save it.

Control all the oil fields  
Hooray, boy hooray  
The rich count the profits  
While we fire away

Should we rally around the flag  
even when the war is wrong?  
Must we destroy the world to save it?

Boys and girls who volunteer  
No one whispers in their ear  
that we must destroy the world to save it

They say Freedom is our aim  
But they plan a different game  
We must destroy the world to save it!

There’s a world full of workers  
Who shout that it’s wrong!  
Money gives the orders--  
Why should we All go along?

So let’s raise a different flag,  
And Let’s march a different road;  
It’s OUR world, and we must fight to save it!

## RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

### ‘Real men want Iran’

It’s a matter of public record that this war with Iraq is largely....a pilot project. In August a British official close to the Bush team told Newsweek: Everyone wants to go to Baghdad. Real men want to go to Teheran.” In February 2003, according to Ha’aretz, an Israeli newspaper, Under Secretary of State John Bolton told Israeli officials that after defeating Iraq, the United States would “deal with” Iran, Syria and North Korea.

Will Iraq really be the first of many? It seems all too likely.... (NYT, 3/18)

### No Iraq chem. attack plan

In the abandoned headquarters of the Iraqi Army’s Eighth Infantry....gas masks....and detailed instructions on how to use chemical weapons protective suits were found....

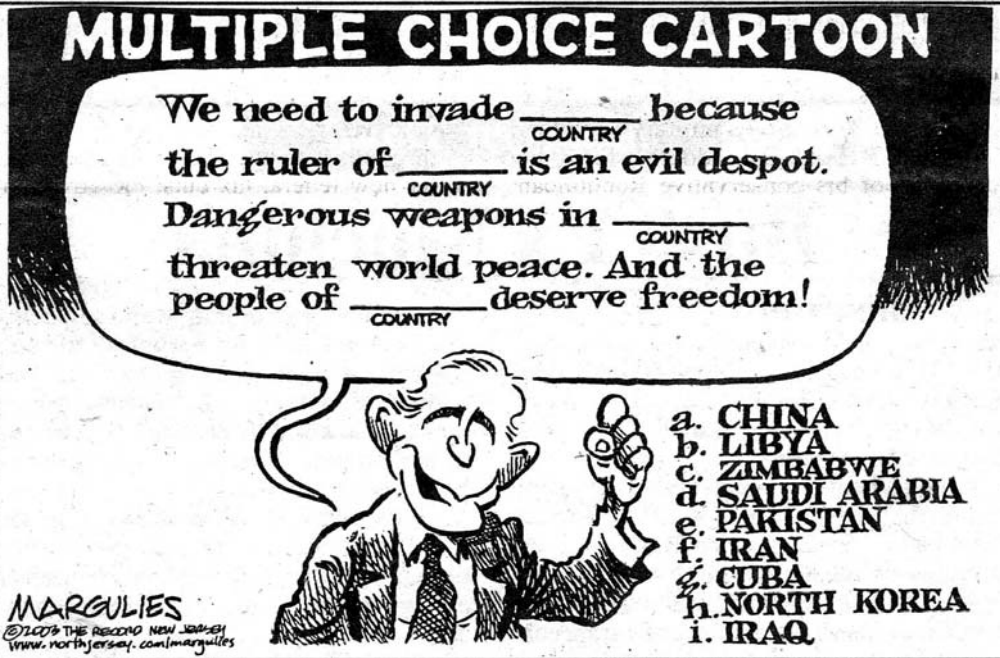
No evidence of instruction in the use of chemical agents as offensive weapons was found.... (NYT, 3/29)

### Snipers hit some civilians

“We dropped a few civilians,” Sergeant Schrupf said, “but what do you do?”

....More than once...he faced...one Iraqi soldier standing among two or three civilians....in which he and other men in his unit opened fire. He recalled watching one of the women standing near the Iraqi soldier go down.

“I’m sorry,” the sergeant said. But the chick was in the way.” (NYT, 2/29)



### The rich don’t volunteer

The soldiers, sailors, pilots and others who are risking, and giving, their lives in Iraq represent a slice of a broad swath of American society — but by no means all of it.

Of the 28 servicemen killed who have been identified so far,...just one was from a well-to-do family.... (NYT, 3/30)

### World: US is imperialist

Nearly one week into the war in Iraq, the public mood in many countries around the world seemed to become angrier and more sarcastic than ever....

Today, there were huge demonstrations in Spain, smaller demonstrations in South Korea, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and one

somewhat with poor Iraqis, whom they saw simply as people of color being attacked by a rich, and largely white, American government. (NYT, 3/27)

### US Muslims fear attacks

Many Muslim Americans say the backlash they have felt since the attack of Sept. 11 has intensified since the United States attacked Iraq. Other Americans, they say, are making them feel scared, anxious and obligated to change their life styles....

Some of the most recent incidents have been violent....Women who wear a traditional scarf, known as a hijab, say they feel especially vulnerable. (NYT, 3/29)

### God not on rulers’ side?

The leaders of the many mainline American churches opposed to a war with Iraq....have not been able to see Mr. Bush to express their anxieties....

“There’s never been such unity among the churches in the country, even during Vietnam,” said the Rev. Jim Wallis, the editor of the evangelical magazine Sojourners.... (NYT, 3/10)

### Depends what’s globalized

For the most part, the same elected officials and media commentators who have applauded money-driven globalization are now appalled by the sight of anti-war globalization: The recent spectacle of millions of people demonstrating against war on the same day around the world.... (Liberal Opinion Week, 3/3)

that involved angry clashes with the police in Sydney, Australia.

....A common image...was of the United States as an imperial power intoxicated by its military supremacy....

In Germany, Der Spiegel wondered on its Web site whether the difficulties American troops have encountered in Iraq might spell the end of the American empire. (NYT, 3/27)

### US Black people feel Iraqi pain

...78 percent of white respondents to the poll said they approved of how Mr. Bush was handling the situation, while just 37 percent of blacks agreed with that position....

Some...said that they identified at least



# 80,000 in Bolivia Battle Army in Mass Uprising

LA PAZ, BOLIVIA — Last month, pitched battles between tens of thousands of rebellious workers and the Bolivian army shook this country to its heels. Militant workers attacked government buildings and sacked the offices of the parties comprising the government coalition. The army murdered twenty demonstrators.

Workers, students and peasants were protesting the latest austerity measures imposed by President Gonzalo Sanchez de Losada, a multi-millionaire businessman. To meet the demands of the International Monetary Fund, Losada imposed a 12.5% tax on the already low wages of workers. Even the cops protested — their wages will be taxed also. Several were killed by Military Police.

On Feb. 12, shots rang out just a few blocks away from the Executive Committee of the Labor Federation (COB) meeting. Tear gas streamed through the windows and three women entered shouting, “The Army is killing us, shooting at our husbands!” Two delegates from the Miners’ Union reported, “The Alto [shantytowns bordering this capital city] is rising up. Workers are leaving their factories and the Army is beginning to shoot. Several have been injured.”

One union leader said, “Enough discus-

sion. We must be with the people.” A miner from Potosi exclaimed, “It’s hard to reach Plaza Murillo, the area is militarized,” but then he shouted, “Let’s go!” responding to the unanimous feeling at the meeting.

Despite the fear of military snipers, twenty union representatives lined up behind the labor federation’s red flag and marched to the Plaza to join those already fighting. A military policemen watching through binoculars from the nearby Air Force building warned that the COB was marching. As they neared the Plaza, the demonstrators cheered.

The army was shooting with rifles and machine guns. Tear gas flooded the area. Marchers chanted, “The people won’t be shut down by machine guns,” as they entered the Plaza. The army shot several demonstrators and the workers fired back, forcing the President to withdraw the troops.

The next day, 80,000 miners, teachers, students and indigenous peasants faced armored vehicles and tanks as they prepared to march. The previous day’s injuries and 17 deaths didn’t scare the masses. They chanted, “The People, United, Will Never Be Defeated,” and “Goni [the President], assassin, hanging from a lamppost



awaits you!” The army opened fire murdering several demonstrators and injuring many more. The protestors fought back attacking government buildings, despite the army’s advantage.

Several days later, the President spoke to the nation, saying he “is doing his part to help the economy” and won’t collect his salary. This from a man worth \$200 million is an insult to the impoverished workers and their families. The masses responded magnificently, burning and sacking offices of the government’s coalition parties.

A pre-revolutionary situation has arisen, with some cops joining the demonstrators, creating divisions within the repressive arms of the ruling class. But, like similar uprisings in Argentina and Ecuador, there is no revolutionary leadership to guide these struggles. From all this, the workers and their allies must learn that now is the time to build a revolutionary communist movement to fight for a society without any bosses.☛

## Thousands Tell Democratic Gov. ‘No War, No Cuts!’

LOS ANGELES, March 28 — Thousands of students, workers, faculty and administration from community colleges here rallied downtown against the cuts initiated and carried out by Democrat governor Gray Davis. He’s slashing 10% of the Community College budget, which means canceling classes, summer sessions, laying off counselors among other attacks.

Students at LA Trade Technical College marched to the downtown rally chanting “No cuts!” protesting the 118% tuition hike, program cuts and teacher/worker layoffs. One student started chanting, “No War! No cuts! These cuts are for the war!” linking the current cuts to the war in Iraq. Others joined in, but some from the Associated Students (AS) tried to shut him up. They said such chants would lead to police repression and violence, that people weren’t ready for them. Students from another college were told they couldn’t board a bus for the rally with signs linking the cuts to war.

Unlike the AS leadership, people at the rally were able to relate the cuts to the war and to the growth of prisons. A fellow Trade Tech student carried a poster with the chant written on it. PLP passed out thousands of flyers denouncing the racist cuts, showing that the war would cost \$1.9 trillion including the occupation of Iraq and its oil fields. Many students bought CHALLENGE. Some asked for more information about

the Party. One student said his brother-in-law was killed last week in Iraq, while he himself was laid off from his school job. He was glad to get the paper and wants to stay in touch.

PLP’ers are building ties with fellow students and plan to increase regular CHALLENGE sales at school, leading to a study-action group.

The budget cuts and the war are part and parcel of the same attack. The Chancellor of the Community Colleges wants the cuts spread more evenly instead of disproportionately against the community colleges. This pits community colleges against elementary and high schools, instead of uniting everyone against the war budget.

These cuts are racist since the community colleges are where many black and Latin students learn a job skill or take courses needed for transfer to a 4-year college. Racism and wars for profits stem from capitalism, which must be fought and, in the long run, destroyed by communist revolution.

One speaker proudly announced that one of the first U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq graduated from an LA community college, and that these schools provide front-line soldiers. But these same soldiers, used by U.S. bosses to kill Iraqi workers, then come home (if they make it) to find their jobs have been eliminated to pay for a war to seize Iraq’s oil.☛

## The ‘Times’ Is Planning for War, War, War....

Readers may feel CHALLENGE is repetitive in constantly pointing out that imperialism is leading us into endless wars and that the liberal wing of the U.S. ruling class, not just the Bush Klan, is championing such a future. Then take a look at the lead editorial of the March 30 New York Times, principal mouthpiece for the liberals, for a picture of what they have in store for us. It ain’t peace. In fact it’s already drawing strategic conclusions from barely ten days into its current adventure.

Under the heading. “The Weapons We Need Now,” the Times is criticizing the U.S. military for not ordering the “correct” weapons to protect and expand an isolated U.S. imperialism worldwide for the wars of the 21st century. It says the U.S. needs more “carrier-based Navy jets and long-range Air Force bombers that don’t depend on bases in neighboring countries that can suddenly become unavailable.” Then there are the “badly-needed C-17 cargo transports, which can ferry large numbers of troops to distant battlefields.”

It now concludes that “the future will depend on the mili-

tary’s ability to fight ground wars against guerrilla soldiers and take villages and cities using ground forces....The ‘Defense’ Department is still buying weapon systems designed to fight the well-equipped superpower enemies of the 20th century rather than the mobile, unconventional forces...of the 21st.”

“The Navy needs to increase its capacity to deliver troops to distant battlefields, as well as maintain the aircraft carrier groups that function as...offshore bases.”

Then it urges the Army and Marines to order “more of the armor and reconnaissance tools needed for the kind of urban warfare that may soon get under way in Baghdad.” And “The Navy...needs...more unmanned subs and more high-speed sealift ships to ferry troops and equipment into battle,” while “The Marine Corps needs...more ships designed to allow forces to assemble and equip themselves in relatively safer offshore locations.”

Finally, the Times says, “The lessons learned from this war should guide ‘us’ in rethinking the way we should equip the military of the future.” It somewhat panically concludes, “There’s no time to lose.”

Of course, if the troops refuse to carry out these plans — as hundreds of thousands refused in the Vietnam War — what’s the Times’ strategy then?☛

## H.S. Students Take Leadership in Anti-War Struggle

BROOKLYN, NY, April 1 — “Why is the U.S. at war?” a Brooklyn high school teacher asked. “OIL!” shouted the class. This awareness, and the walkouts that have accompanied it, are a good start for what may become a new generation of anti-imperialist fighters.

Millions worldwide are protesting the U.S. invasion of Iraq. New York City students joined this movement twice last month, walking out of class.

March 5th was a national student strike for “Books not Bombs.” Students from over twenty-five schools converged on Union Square in an impressive show of opposition to imperialist war. It has become customary to view Bush as the problem — “regime change begins at home” — but oil was also a word on many lips.

The day the war started, students again walked out, linking them to workers and students throughout the world. They were joined at Union Square by other students, representatives from several NYC unions, and average New Yorkers who understood that when the bombs fell some kind of immediate response was needed. The students had a great impact on the crowd, including a World War II veteran who said he’s been opposing war for over sixty years.

Sixty years from now do we want to still be protesting another imperialist war? No, we want a better future than that. In this connection, it was highly significant that new comrades got involved in planning these walkouts and bringing the Party’s analysis to their friends.

Only two futures lie ahead: imperialist war or working-class internationalism through communist revolution. There’s really no middle road.☛